AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-4 (Cancelled)

Claim 5 (Currently amended) A plastic substrate for magnetic recording media, said plastic substrate being manufactured by injection molding a thermoplastic norbornene resin dried by ~~the~~ a method ~~described in Claim 1.~~ comprising:

drying said thermoplastic norbornene resin under at least one of a vacuum and ordinary pressure; and

said drying removes atmospheric gas components and low-boiling-point organic components contained in said thermoplastic norbornene resin.

Claim 6 (Currently amended) A plastic substrate for magnetic recording media, ~~said plastic substrate being manufactured by injection molding said thermoplastic norbornene resin dried by the method described in Claim 2.~~ of claim 5 wherein:

said drying under ordinary pressure is conducted at a temperature between 80 and 120°C; and

said drying under vacuum is conducted under a degree of vacuum of 20 Pa or lower at a temperature between 80 and 120°C.

Claim 7 (Currently amended) A plastic substrate for magnetic recording media, ~~said plastic substrate being manufactured by injection molding said thermoplastic norbornene resin dried by the method described in Claim 3.~~ of claim 5 wherein:

the thermoplastic norbornene resin contains, after said drying, N_2 of 20 ppm or lower, O_2 of 20 ppm or lower, H_2O of 1 ppm or lower, low-boiling-point aliphatic organic components of 20 ppb or lower in total, and low-boiling-point aromatic organic components of 20 ppb or lower in total.

Claim 8 (Currently amended) A plastic substrate for magnetic recording media, ~~said plastic substrate being manufactured by injection molding said thermoplastic norbornene resin dried by the method described in Claim 4.~~ of claim 6 wherein:

the thermoplastic norbornene resin contains, after the drying, N_2 of 20 ppm or lower, O_2 of 20 ppm or lower, H_2O of 1 ppm or lower, low-boiling-point aliphatic organic components of 20 ppb or lower in total, and low-boiling-point aromatic organic components of 20 ppb or lower in total.

Claim 9 (Original) The plastic substrate according to Claim 5, wherein said plastic substrate contains, in a surface thereof, 100 or less rugged portions of 1μm x 1μm or wider in area.

Claim 10 (Original) The plastic substrate according to Claim 5, wherein:
a straightness, Pa, in the radial direction of said plastic substrate, is 1μm or less;
a micro-waviness of said plastic substrate is 500 Å or lower; and
an average surface roughness of said plastic substrate is 5 Å or lower.

Claim 11 (Original) The plastic substrate according to Claim 9, wherein:
a straightness, Pa, in the radial direction of said plastic substrate, is 1 μm or less;
a micro-waviness of said plastic substrate is 500 Å or lower; and
an average surface roughness of said plastic substrate is 5 Å or lower.

Claim 12 (Original) A magnetic recording medium comprising:
said plastic substrate according to Claim 5; a magnetic layer above said plastic substrate;
a protection layer on said magnetic layer; and a lubricant layer on said protection layer.

Claim 13 (Original) The magnetic recording medium according to Claim 12, wherein said plastic substrate contains, in a surface thereof, 100 or less rugged portions of 1μm x 1μm or wider in area.

Claim 14 (Original) The magnetic recording medium according to Claim 12, wherein:

a straightness, Pa, in the radial direction of said plastic substrate, is 1μm or less;

a micro-waviness of said plastic substrate is 500 Å or lower; and

an average surface roughness of said plastic substrate is 5 Å or lower.

Claim 15 (Original) The magnetic recording medium according to Claim 13, wherein:

a straightness, Pa, in the radial direction of said plastic substrate, is 1 μm or less;

a micro-waviness of said plastic substrate is 500 Å or lower; and

an average surface roughness of said plastic substrate is 5 Å or lower.

Claim 16 (Original) The magnetic recording medium according to Claim 12, wherein an output of a strain gauge is 0.5 g or less at the end of continuous and high-speed head seek tests conducted for 24 hr on said magnetic recording medium, rotating at 4500 rpm using a low-flying-height head having a flying height of 1μ".

Claims 17-20 (Cancelled)

Claim 21 (New) A method of drying a thermoplastic norbornene resin in pellet form comprising:

drying said thermoplastic norbornene resin in pellet form for use as a raw material in the manufacture of a substrate of a magnetic recording medium at a temperature between 80° and 120°C, and under at least one of a vacuum and ordinary pressure;

wherein said drying removes atmospheric gas components and low-boiling-point organic components contained in said thermoplastic norbornene resin.

Claim 22 (New) A method of drying a thermoplastic norbornene resin comprising:

drying said thermoplastic norbornene resin under at least one of a vacuum and ordinary pressure;

wherein said drying removes atmospheric gas components and low-boiling-point organic components contained in said thermoplastic norbornene resin; and

wherein the thermoplastic norbornene resin contains, after said drying, N_2 of 20 ppm or lower, O_2 of 20 ppm or lower, H_2O of 1 ppm or lower, low-boiling-aliphatic organic components of 20 ppb or lower in total, and low-boiling-point aromatic organic components of 20 ppb or lower in total.